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Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 08186 161405Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /018 W
----------170034Z 019120 /55
R 161206Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO USDOC WASHDC
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMCONSUL CASABLANCA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
SECSTATE WASHDC 5074
AMCONSUL TANGIER
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

UNCLAS CAIRO 8186

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, EG
SUBJ: MARCH 1978 MINING EQUIPMENT SEMINAR MISSION

REF: A) STATE 077858 B) USDOC 08838 C) CAIRO A-13

1. EMBASSY TRADE PROMOTION SCHEDULE CALLS FOR TOURISM EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION IN FEBRUARY 1978. ALTHOUGH PRECISE DATES ARE UNCERTAIN, WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO SCHEDULE AN ADDITIONAL EVENT BETWEEN THIS MISSION AND OPENING OF 1978 CAIRO FAIR IN MARCH. IF TOURISM EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION WERE CANCELLED, WE WOULD WELCOME MINING EQUIPMENT SEMINAR MISSION. HOWEVER, CAREFUL ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN CONSIDERATIONS NOTED BELOW IN ASSESSING USEFULNESS OF VISIT.

2. IN BEST PROSPECTS REPORT REFERRED TO REFTEL A, MINING EQUIPMENT WAS PART OF CATEGORY WHICH ALSO INCLUDED EQUIPMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS HANDLING. WE BELIEVE THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL MARKET FOR BASIC EQUIPMENT SUCH AS DUMP TRUCKS, BULLDOZERS, LOADERS, COMPRESSORS, ETC. MARKET PROSPECTS ARE ESPEICALLY GOOD WHEN POSSIBILITY OF AID ASSISTANCE, WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN
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INVOKED TO PROVIDE A NUMBER OF ITEMS OF THIS TYPE, IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. EQUIPMENT OF THIS SORT IS OBVIOUSLY NOT RESTRICTED TO USE IN MINING, HOWEVER, AND WE DOUBT THAT SEMINAR MISSION IS BEST WAY OF APPROACHING MARKET FOR THESE GOODS.

3. WITH RESPECT TO ADVANCED TECHNIQUES AND SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT, PROPOSED MINING EQUIPMENT SEMINAR MISSION COULD BE VERY

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USEFUL MEANS OF PRESENTING AMERICAN KNOW-HOW IN THIS AREA TO EGYPTIANS. ACTUAL SALES PROSPECTS IN NEAR TERM, HOWEVER, ARE UNCERTAIN.

4. IN FIELD OF PHOSPHATE MINING, FOR EXAMPLE, STATISTICS INDICATE THAT PRODUCTION OF ORE IN EGYPT (UNLIKE WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE CASE IN MOROCCO AND TUNISIA) HAS BEEN DECLINING IN RECENT YEARS (SEE REF.C.).THIS IS DUE IN LARGE PART TO DEPLETION OF DEPOSITS CURRENTLY BEING EXPLOITED. THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL DEPOSITS AT ABU TARTOUR IN WESTERN DESERT, BUT DEVELOPMENT OF THESE RESOURCES, IF IT IS TO OCCUR, WILL REQUIRE LARGE INVEST-MENTS IN INFRESTRUCTURE AND IS PROBABLY SOME YEARS AWAY. MINING OF IRON ORE AT BAHARIYYA CASIS IS CURRENTLY BEING CARRIED OUT WITH SOVIET EQUIPMENT WHICH EGYPTIANS WERE ABLE TO ACQUIRE ON VERY FAVORABLY TERMS UNDER AID AGREEMENTS. ALTHOUGH GOE IN 1976 OPENED CERTAIN TYPES OF MINING TO PARTICIPATION BY PRIVATE CAPITAL (REF.C), THESE GENERALLY REPRESENTED THE MORE MARGINAL OPPORTUNITIES WHICH ARE EASILY EXTRACTED WITH EXISITING EQUIPMENT.

5. WE ARE PREPARING FURTHER REPLY (REFTEL A REQUESTED THAT RESPONSE BE SUMBITTED BY JUNE 1), WHICH WILL COVER ADDITIONAL DETAILS.
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